Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity
(NOFO): FY 2023 International Visitor Leadership Program Collaborative Services
Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement
Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0008950
Assistance Listing Number: 19.402
Key Date/Application Deadline: July 18, 2022

Executive Summary: The U.S. Department of States' Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' Office of International Visitors (ECA/PE/V), announces an open competition for the FY 2023 International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) Collaborative Services. The IVLP is the U.S. Department of State's premier professional exchange program. It seeks to build mutual understanding between the United States and other nations through carefully designed short-term visits to the United States for current and emerging foreign leaders. These visits reflect the International Visitors' professional interests and support the foreign policy goals of the United States.

Only *one* proposal will be considered by ECA from each applicant organization. In cases where more than one submission from an applicant appears in grants.gov, ECA will *only* consider the submission made closest in time to the NOFO deadline; that submission would constitute the one and only proposal ECA would review from that applicant. It is the Bureau's intent to award one cooperative agreement for one base year plus two non-competitive continuations for an estimated total amount of $3,300,000, pending the availability of funds. Please see section B.) Federal Award Information, below for additional details.

A.   Program Description:

Overall grant making authority for the program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries...; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

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Purpose: The International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) seeks to increase mutual understanding between the United States and foreign publics through carefully designed professional programs that support U.S. foreign policy objectives. The goal of the IVLP is to provide firsthand knowledge about U.S. society, culture, and politics, while cultivating lasting relationships and to help strengthen U.S. engagement with countries around the world. IVLP participants are current or potential foreign leaders in government, politics, media, education, science, non-government organizations (NGOs), the arts, and other key fields. They are selected by officers of U.S. embassies and consulates overseas and are approved by U.S. Department of State staff in Washington, D.C. Since the program's inception in 1940, more than 225,000 distinguished International Visitors have participated in the program. More than 500 program alumni subsequently became heads of state or government in their home countries. All IVLP projects maintain a non-partisan character.

The IVLP requires collaborative services to support its goals and objectives, to support the overall program, and to benefit all participants as described in this notice of funding opportunity. The required support will be achieved through a cooperative agreement.

The following collaborative services will be required by the award recipient:

IVLP Impact Awards
Facilitation of up to 325 IVLP Impact Awards to IVLP alumni of up to $5,000 per initial award to conduct follow-on activities in their home countries related to the exchange topic. These enhancement awards will deliver results that focus on foreign policy priorities such as disinformation, combating gender-based violence, and public health. The IVLP Collaborative Services cooperative agreement recipient will be responsible for administering the awards, including announcing the awards and receiving proposals, selecting recipients in consultation with ECA/PE/V, liaising with overseas missions, disbursing funds, monitoring the outcomes of the activity, maintaining a website, capturing and amplifying impacts, and ensuring the financial integrity of each enhancement.

U.S Federalism Lectures
In order to ensure that IVLP participants have a basic understanding of the U.S. system of government, the award recipient will arrange a series of briefings on U.S. federalism. Briefings should be conducted by Washington-area university political science or government professors and other qualified experts, and the proposal should list appropriate qualifications and the names and biographies of suggested federalism briefers. In most cases, these briefings will be for participants on smaller projects and those programmed by the IVLP On Demand Division. Previous annual estimates for federalism briefings included approximately 35 briefings for 144 visitors. The budget should include organization of at least one federalism briefing each week; however, the fees for the actual briefer will be authorized and paid with program funding and should not be included in the budget for this award. The award recipient should clarify the type of materials that will be provided to each participant and budget for all reproduction costs as part of this award. The proposal must include information on the availability of space to hold the

weekly briefings. The award recipient should clearly detail available options for meeting rooms to accommodate the weekly federalism briefings. In general, meeting rooms should be a cost share and not included as an expense as part of this solicitation nor a project level expense. The award recipient should clearly explain their ability to expand or contract the number of briefings pending the needs of ECA/PE/V and should detail how the briefings will be marketed to ECA/PE/V and other implementing partners - national program agencies (NPAs).

Capitol Hill Insider Tours
The recipient will arrange tours through the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center and/or Congressional Offices and provide briefings to IVLP participants on the role of the U.S. Congress. The proposal must indicate how this opportunity for tours will be marketed to NPAs and to ECA/PE/V program officers to ensure that proposed targets and number of tours are arranged. The award recipient should clearly explain their ability to expand or contract the number of tours pending the needs of the ECA/PE/V. Previous annual estimates for Capitol Hill insider tours included approximately 27 tours for 290 visitors.

Home Hospitality
The award recipient will provide opportunities for IVLP participants to share a meal or similar U.S. cultural experience as guests of diverse occupational, age, gender, and ethnic groups in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Some individual and group programs might include an opportunity for an overnight stay (home stay) in an American home. The proposal must indicate the proposed number of hospitality events and clarify a plan to market this opportunity to other NPAs and ECA/PE/V program officers, especially for projects in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area over a holiday weekend. At a minimum, the administrative support to organize at least two home hospitality events each month for a minimum of 125 participants each year should be part of the budget. The proposal should also provide a suggested list of home hospitality hosts in the Washington, D.C. area and clearly identify how diversity will be encouraged. Previous annual estimates for home hospitality included approximately 30 events for 149 visitors.

Messenger Service
The award recipient will provide a daily messenger run between all D.C.-based NPA offices (currently eight locations), ECA/PE/V, the U.S. Department of State's Office of Language Services, Global Ties U.S., and Washington, D.C.-based hotels when requested for delivery of program materials for in-house IVLP On Demand projects. All fees associated with operation of the service should be included in the proposal including details on the staffing pattern and associated costs.

Trainings, Meetings, Programmatic Activities and Capacity-Building Efforts
In consultation and coordination with ECA/PE/V/C/R, the award recipient will conduct capacity-building events, including training, for members of the IVLP network to enhance their programming skills and reinforce their overall goals for the IVLP. The award recipient will help coordinate 7 days of trainings, meetings, and/or other capacity-building efforts per year (for

Interpreters, International Visitor Liaisons, and other individuals associated with the IVLP) to highlight resource development and programmatic activities. The budget should include staffing to allow the recipient organization to coordinate meeting room space, transportation, and appropriate meals, and should include honorarium for two-three professionals based on the needs of the activity and ECA approved honorarium rates. The award recipient should plan to administratively support the attendance of at least 50 individuals at each capacity-building activity.

Hotel Procurement for all Group Projects in Washington, DC and New York, NY and any special initiatives that open or close outside of Washington, DC and New York (approximately of six per year). The award recipient should dedicate one full-time equivalent (FTE) to continually build strong relationships and enhance hotel procurement efforts in Washington, DC and New York. The award recipient will operate a hotel pricing program in Washington, DC and New York City for the benefit of the entire IVLP that meets all federal requirements for procurement.

Procurement Support for IVLP Alumni in the Classroom
Through the IVLP Alumni in the Classroom (IVLPAITC) series, U.S. students learn about global issues firsthand while building their own leadership skills; and IVLP alumni strengthen their ties with Americans and deepen their links to U.S. culture and society. The series engages IVLP alumni with student audiences from grade seven through university. Discussions address a range of important foreign policy priorities. While the IVLPAITC is managed by ECA/PE/V; the recipient will support IVLPAITC in a very specific and limited way.

A1. Recipient Responsibilities:

1. Salary for a procurement expert to negotiate group rates and sufficient lodging capacity with hotels in Washington, DC and New York City in compliance with procurement guidelines; coordinate assignment of all group projects to Washington, DC hotels (approximately 160-180 projects per year) in close consultation with ECA/PE/V/C/R; develop and maintain relationships with hotel contacts and coordinate all requests for proposals for larger special initiatives, as designated by ECA/PE/V; and review language in local hotel group contracts as appropriate. All hotel rooms and services must be negotiated at current U.S. government rates or below and approval will not be given for venues at a higher rate without justification and prior ECA/PE/V approval.
2. Provide ECA/PE/V and NPA hotel coordinators with a list of approved hotels for use in the IVLP for smaller projects.
3. Act as a liaison between hotel sales representatives and ECA/PE/V to identify and resolve issues related to hotel pricing and cancellations.
4. Provide hotel pricing analysis for ECA/PE/V as requested and establish a system of documentation, communication and review of internal and external comparative price data to assist in rate management for IVLP hotels.

5. Work with Global Ties U.S. community-based organizations (CBMs) to meet guidelines around hotel procurement for IVLP participants in their communities.

All proposed hotel sites and copies of the hotel proposals are subject to ECA/PE/V/C/R approval, and ECA/PE/V/C/R reserves the right to request renegotiation of any and all hotel agreements/services not adhering to the above conditions.

Administrative Support for IVLP Special Initiatives

The award recipient will coordinate various aspects of up to six special initiatives (larger groups that could include up to 150 participants). These administrative tasks may include, but are not limited to, coordinating venues, coordinating speakers and panels, arranging interpreting booths, coordinating meals and other refreshments, coordinating ground transportation for the groups when in the same city; contracting for appropriate audiovisual equipment and printing fees for required items (tent cards, signs, name tags); and drafting social media plans for all special initiatives.

Administrative Support for "In-House" IVLP On Demand Projects
The IVLP On Demand Division manages approximately 50-75 "in house" projects annually, in which ECA/PE/V staff manage projects directly without relying on the availability of an implementing partner. The recipient should plan to provide administrative support for all "in-house" projects. The award recipient should dedicate, on an as-needed basis, up to two full-time equivalents (FTEs) who would have primary responsibilities related to administrative support for the IVLP On Demand Division. Applicants must have the ability to implement a direct billing payment system with hotels in Washington, DC and across the United States for all IVLP On Demand projects that are assigned. Costs noted below as "not part of this award" will be funded through other mechanisms.

Duties should include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting opening briefings for each project related to administrative program details;
- Issuing tickets for domestic transportation (airplane and train) for participants and assigned Interpreters/International Visitor Liaisons (I/L) (funds for transportation are not part of this award);
- Issuing per diem via debit card for participants (funds for per diem are not part of this award);
- Arranging charter transportation (funds for local transportation are not part of this award);
- Enrolling participants in the Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) or its replacement health plan;

- Paying project expenses and completing final budgets with funds from project-level budgets that are not part of this award;
- Processing reimbursements to Global Ties U.S. community-based members and I/Ls as required by each project;
- Pre-paying or direct billing hotels throughout the proposed itinerary for each project (funds for hotel costs are not part of this award);
- Arranging meeting space for any required project meetings (funds for meeting space are not part of this award);
- Compiling program packets based on guidance from ECA/PE/V.

The award recipient should include in the line-item budget and narrative any administrative fees associated with processing debit cards for meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) payments to IVLP On Demand participants which are managed in-house by ECA/PE/V staff members. In addition, the award recipient will share a plan on how it will issue and brief participants about the proper use of debit cards.

Procurement Support for IVLP Alumni in the Classroom
The recipient will provide limited support for IVLP Alumni in the Classroom (IVLPAITC):
- Maintaining contracts and disbursing payments for one (1) IVLPAITC subject matter expert (SME)
  o Negotiating and finalizing contracts with the SME, including amendments, as needed
  o Tracking up to 5 major milestones for the SME in coordination with ECA/PE/V; issuing all payments to the SME
    ▪ Hosting a working document of all major milestones and sub-tasks for the vendor to cross reference with payment schedule/timeline and ECA/PE/V satisfaction
    ▪ Working with the vendor to receive progress reports and budgets according to payment schedules/timelines
    ▪ Hosting an IVLPAITC team meeting (with ECA/PE/V and the vendor) at each major milestone
- Procuring interpretation as needed
  o If the IVLPAITC team is unable to assign consecutive and simultaneous interpreters to IVLPAITC projects, the recipient will attempt to procure consecutive and simultaneous interpreters to the best of its ability.

A2. Substantial Involvement:
 In a cooperative agreement, the Department is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring, as follows:

1. ECA/PE/V will approve and provide all programming funds. Therefore, the budget for this cooperative agreement should only include staff expenses and overhead costs to implement the required services.
2. ECA/PE/V authorizes the implementation of up to 325 IVLP Impact Awards.

3. Additionally, ECA/PE/V authorizes Federalism Lectures, Home Hospitality, and Capitol Hill Insider Tours based on project demand and coordinates the use of these services with other program partners.
4. Community Relations Branch (ECA/PE/V/C/R) approves the number and timing of any Workshops and Trainings and approves all expenditures.
5. ECA/PE/V/C/R will review all requests for proposals (RFP) for hotel requirements for all special initiatives and will have final approval on selected hotels based on criteria received from the RFP and analyzed by the recipient.
6. ECA/PE/V will select all participants and will assign all "in-house" IVLP On Demand projects.
7. ECA/PE/V will manage the implementation of the *IVLP Alumni in the Classroom* (IVLPAITC) series of virtual activities, including, but not limited to:
   a. Overseeing the work, including communicating directly with and providing guidance, for an IVLPAITC subject matter expert (SME)
   b. Monitoring SME work and progress, meeting regularly and coordinating as necessary
   c. Approving SME timesheets for payment processing
   d. Executing a communications strategy that strengthens alumni connections with the Department of State
   e. Implementing a social media campaign that aligns with outreach strategy and branding guidelines that will highlight IVLPAITC virtual sessions and share alumni, U.S. student, and community-based member stories
   f. Using video and other tools to create shareable content and use online streaming capability to livestream parts of the seminars, if possible and practicable

A3. Non-Competitive Continuations:
Proposal narratives should include a commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional non-competitive continuations, pending successful performance and the availability of funds. The narrative should focus on details specific to the implementation of the base year program, with the understanding that the program design, duration, and participant numbers would be similar when/if the subsequent two non-competitive continuations are exercised. ECA will perform an annual performance evaluation/review to determine if a non-competitive continuation will be exercised. Satisfactory performance and the availability of funds is a condition of continued administration of the program and execution of all non-competitive continuations.

A4. Additional Recommendations:
1. Proposals should demonstrate an applicant's broad knowledge of international relations and U.S. foreign policy issues.

2. Proposals should demonstrate an applicant's broad knowledge of the United States and U.S. domestic issues.

3. The award recipient with the ability to generate program income must be mindful that program income earned during the project period shall be retained by the award recipient, in accordance with the awarding agency's regulations or the terms and conditions of the award, and used in one or more of the ways listed below:

    i. Added to funds committed to the project by the federal awarding agency and award recipient and used to further eligible project or program objectives;

    ii. Used to finance the non-federal share of the project or program; and/or

    iii. Deducted from the total project or program allowable cost in determining the net allowable costs on which the federal share of costs is based.

4. The proposal should demonstrate a clear understanding of the work to be undertaken and outline the responsibilities of all key personnel involved. The proposal should set forth in detail the award recipient's management approach and a work plan/timeframe.

Communications:

All communications shall be with the designated Bureau elements as follows:

    i. Program Administration – Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of International Visitors, Community Resources Division, Community Relations Branch, ECA/PE/V/C/R

    ii. Financial – Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Grants Division, ECA/EX/G

B. Federal Award Information:

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under A. Program Description above.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2023 – base year – $2,500,000; FY 2024 – non-competitive continuation year – $400,000, pending successful performance and the availability of funds; FY 2025 – non-competitive continuation year-two – $400,000, pending successful performance and the availability of funds.

Approximate Total Funding: $3,300,000. This figure represents base year plus two Non-Competitive Continuation years, pending successful performance and the availability of funds.

Approximate Number of Awards: One (1).

Approximate Average Award: $3,300,000, pending the availability of funds.

Floor of Award Range: $3,300,000, pending the availability of funds.

Ceiling of Award Range: $3,300,000, pending the availability of funds.

Anticipated Award Date: January 1, 2023, pending the availability of FY 2023 funds.

Anticipated Project Completion Date: December 31, 2025. This date reflects the anticipated duration of the award – one base year plus two non-competitive continuation years.

Additional Information: ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

A cooperative agreement will be awarded for a period of 12 months (base year) with Non-Competitive Continuations for two additional 12 month periods (non-competitive continuation years one and two). ECA will notify the recipient of its intention to exercise or not to exercise a Non-Competitive Continuation at least 90 days in advance of expiration of the current year after an internal evaluation of the recipient's performance. The decision to exercise a Non-Competitive Continuation will depend both on the satisfactory performance of the recipient and the availability of funds.

C.) Eligibility Information:

C.1.   Eligible applicants: U.S. public and private academic and cultural institutions, exchange-of-persons, and other not-for-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) may submit applications for this competition. Applicants must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. Please see the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for additional information.

All applicants must also have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number and be registered in SAM.gov (see additional information about this requirement in D.3. and D.5. below).

C.2.   Other Eligibility Requirements: The following additional eligibility requirements apply to this NOFO announcement:

> a.) ECA's grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to $130,000 in ECA funding. ECA anticipates making one grant/cooperative agreement, in an amount of over $130,000 to support all costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition.

> b.) All proposals must comply with the requirements stated in the NOFO and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI); non-compliance will result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process.

> c.) Only *one* proposal will be considered by ECA from each applicant organization. In cases where more than one submission from an applicant appears in grants.gov, ECA will *only* consider the submission made closest in time to the NOFO deadline; that submission would constitute the one and only proposal ECA would review from that applicant.

d.) The award recipient must have a Washington, D.C. presence. Applicants who do not currently have a Washington, D.C. presence must include a detailed plan in their proposal for establishing such a presence by January 1, 2023. The costs related to establishing such a presence must be borne by the award recipient. No such costs may be included in the budget submission in this proposal.

e.) Applicant organizations must identify the number of visitors the proposed funding levels will support.

f.) The award recipient must have the capability to electronically communicate through the IVLP Resource Center (IVRC), the web-based application that allows award recipients to record and share data electronically with ECA/PE/V and the Global Ties U.S. Community-Based Member (CBM) network. The application produces national program books and includes other essential program related documents.

g.) Applicants must include a separate and clearly labeled attachment with the following:

1. Samples of at least two schedules for international exchange or training programs that they have coordinated within the past four years that demonstrate their organization's competence and abilities to conduct the activities outlined in the NOFO;

2. Samples of orientation and self-evaluation materials used in past international exchange or training programs.

h.) In addition to Letters of Endorsement, DOS will also use past performance as an indicator of an applicant's ability to successfully perform the work. A separate and clearly labeled attachment of the proposal must contain any letters of endorsement and between three and five references who may be called upon to discuss recently completed or ongoing work performed for professional exchange programs (which may include the IVLP). The reference must contain the information outlined below.

At a minimum, applicants must provide the following information for each reference:
- Name of the reference organization
- Project name
- Project description
- Performance period of the contract/cooperative agreement or grant
- Amount of the contract/cooperative agreement or grant
- Technical contact person and telephone number for referenced organization
- Administrative contact person and telephone number for referenced organization.

DOS may contact representatives from the organizations cited in the examples to obtain information on the applicant's past performance. DOS also may obtain past performance information from sources other than those identified by the applicant.

i.) Applicants must include complete and current resumes of the key personnel who will be involved in the program management, design, and implementation of IVLP programs. Each resume is limited to no more than two pages per person.

Please note: Applicant organizations are defined by their legal name, and EIN number as stated on their completed SF-424 and additional supporting documentation outlined in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document.

Qualifications:

Applicants must demonstrate a minimum of four years of successful experience in coordinating international exchanges of a similar nature and must demonstrate the ability to successfully administer all of the required collaborative services for all IVLP project types as identified below:

International Visitor Leadership Program Project Types

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	DEFINITION	FUNDING SOURCE
IND	Individual	One person	Comes from one country and funding source
ITT	Individuals Traveling Together	Two to three people from a single country	Comes from one country; possibly differing funding sources
SCP	Single Country Project	Four or more people from a single country	Comes from one country; possibly differing funding sources. Enhancement funding available
SRP	Sub-Regional Project	Four or more people from different countries within a geographic sub-region	Comes from differing countries and possibly differing funding sources. Enhancement funding available
RP	Regional Project	Six or more participants from different countries within a geographic region	Comes from differing countries and possibly differing funding sources. Enhancement funding available
IRP/MRP	Inter-Regional Project/Multi-Regional Project	Twelve or more participants from multiple regions of the world	Comes from differing countries worldwide. Enhancement funding available

G3P	Individual/Group	Global Government-to-Government Partnership (G3P) is a long-term fellowship program for participants to train at government agencies. Selected due to their potential for leadership within their individual ministries	Could come from different countries, but currently only from Japan. Limited enhancement funding available

C.3.   Cost Sharing or Matching Funds: There is no minimum or maximum percentage of cost sharing required for this competition. However, ECA encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs. When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's Guidance 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution may be reduced in like proportion.

D. Application and Submission Information:

Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, ECA staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

D.1.   Solicitation Package Location: The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the ECA's website at https://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding or from the Grants.gov website at https://www.grants.gov.

D.2.   Content and Form of Submission: Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package, including the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document, which consists of required application forms and standard guidelines for proposal preparation. The application should be submitted per the instructions under D.3p. "Application Deadline and Method of Submission" section below.

D.3.   Unique Entity Identifier Number: You are required to have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a UEI number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a UEI number,

access http://www.dnb.com or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your UEI (Data Universal Numbering System or DUNS) number is included in the appropriate box of the SF – 424 which is part of the formal application package. For more detailed instructions for obtaining a UEI (DUNS) number, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html

D.4.   Required Proposal Elements: All proposals must contain an executive summary, proposal narrative, budget, and budget narrative.

D.5.   Required Registration with the System for Award Management (SAM): All federal award applicants must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) database in order to submit a proposal in response to an open competition on Grants.gov.

All federal award recipients must maintain a current registration in the SAM database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in www.SAM.gov until all program and financial activity and reporting is completed on any issued award. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted. There is no cost associated with registering or updating SAM.gov accounts. Failure to register in SAM.gov will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html

D.6.   Federal Awardee Performance & Integrity Information System (FAPIIS): Prior to making a Federal Assistance award over $250,000, the Federal agency is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in FAPIIS (see 41 U.S.C. 2313) and accessible through SAM.gov. If an Applicant is currently in FAPIIS, they can comment on any information about its organization that a Federal awarding agency previously entered. The Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

D.7.   Required Registration with SAMS Domestic: All ECA award recipient organizations and recipient contacts and signatories must be registered with the U.S. Department of State's SAMS Domestic by accessing https://mygrants.servicenowservices.com and clicking the "create an account" link. SAMS Domestic is the U.S. Department of State's grants management system and is supported by the Department's Integrated Logistics Management System (ILMS). Recipient organizations and recipient contacts and signatories that have previously used SAMS Domestic as a U.S. Department of State award recipient do not need to register again. If

the organization is not able to access the system, please contact the ILMS Help Desk for help in gaining access.

Support for Recipient Organizations and recipient contacts and signatories is available 24 hours, 7 days a week (except federal holidays), and can be reached at 1-888-313-ILMS (4567) or through the ILMS Self Service Portal at https://afsitsm.servicenowservices.com/ilms/.

In the event the ILMS Help Desk is unable to provide you with assistance in a timely manner, please contact ECA_SAMSDomestic@state.gov and copy the program officer associated with the solicitation.

Please take into consideration the following information when preparing your proposal narrative:

D.8.   For Informational Purposes Only - Adherence To All Regulations Governing The J Visa: ECA places critically important emphases on the security and proper administration of the Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at http://j1visa.state.gov or from:

Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation
U.S. Department of State
SA-5, Floor C2, Room C2L13
2200 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20522

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

D.9.   Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and Freedom and Democracy Guidelines: Pursuant to ECA's authorizing legislation, "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, geographic origin, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity, equity, and inclusion will enhance the program's goals and objectives and the participants' exchange experience. Proposals should demonstrate how the program will further engage diverse and underserved communities. Programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of political, social and cultural life in the United States and abroad. Please refer to the "Support of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" review criterion of this document for more information on how this will be reviewed as a part of any application. Please also refer to the "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" section in the "Proposal Submission Instructions" document for specific suggestions on incorporating DEI into the proposal.

Public Law 104-319 provides that "in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," ECA "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Public Law 106 - 113 requires that the governments of the countries described above do not have inappropriate influence in the selection process. Proposals should reflect advancement of these goals in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

D.10.   Program Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

A performance monitoring framework is vital to tracking the performance and the direction, pace, and magnitude of change that result from ECA programs. This section pertains to performance monitoring in particular – as this type of monitoring is distinct from grants monitoring or other program monitoring discussed elsewhere in this solicitation. Performance monitoring is designed to assess progress against established goals and objectives across the Bureau and as established for each award.

In establishing strong performance management practices, ECA is concerned with collecting indicator data on exchange participant outcomes. Because the IVLP is managed by a number of different implementers, a determination has been made that the primary responsibility for collecting indicator data on International Visitor participant outcomes will lie with the Office of International Visitors (ECA/PE/V). Therefore, your proposal should confirm that your organization will support the Bureau's overall performance monitoring efforts established for the IVLP as necessary. Activities include monitoring SME work and progress, administering the data collection tool(s), meeting regularly and coordinating as necessary, and/or sharing any insights or reports.

D.11. Virtual Exchange Component: When changing political, health, environmental, or other similar circumstances require a suspension or halt of in-person activities and where ECA determines that a virtual alternative is appropriate and viable, award recipients should demonstrate the ability and capacity to transition from in-person to virtual exchanges.   Proposals should demonstrate the organization's capacity to provide innovative options for virtual activities to substitute for in-person engagement for program participants. Organizations should consider how they will implement virtual exchange activities, given the potential limits to internet access from participants in some locations and while continuing to advance foreign policy objectives and achieve lasting benefits for U.S. citizens and international participants.

In addition to planning for virtual exchange activities if in-person programming is prohibited, ECA welcomes innovative ideas on how organizations can leverage virtual programming technologies during or in addition to in-person programming. ECA encourages organizations submitting proposals in response to this solicitation to suggest one or more virtual exchange components to complement the in-person exchange. The virtual exchange component(s) could come before, during and/or after the physical exchange. The objective for the virtual exchange

component(s) is to augment the impact of the in-person exchange described in this solicitation. ECA encourages organizations to propose virtual exchange ideas that take advantage of ECA's existing web and social networking platforms. Virtual exchange components would be coordinated with and approved by the ECA program office and U.S. missions abroad on a project-by-project basis.

D.12. Communications Guidance for ECA Grant Recipients: All ECA Grant Recipients must adhere to the requirements in [ECA's Communications Guidance](#) on the creation of program branding and attribution, websites, social media, and press.

D.13. Budget Format: Applicants must submit SF-424A – "Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs" along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget, a detailed budget, and a budget narrative. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification. Budget submissions must identify the number of visitors the proposed funding levels will support. The budget must show all staff expenses and overhead costs. Cost sharing is encouraged and should be shown in the budget presentation. All proposals must demonstrate sound financial management and appropriate internal financial controls.

D13.a. Seasonal Teams:
Proposals may utilize additional staff (seasonal teams) during particularly busy months of the IVLP cycle to accommodate additional projects, if requested by ECA/PE/V. The proposed budget should also include a separate budget spreadsheet for any seasonal program team(s) proposed.

D.13b. Allowable costs for the program include the following:
1. Staff Salaries and Benefits;
2. Office and Program Supplies;
3. Telephone and Communications;
4. Staff Travel and Per Diem;
5. Automatic Data Processing Equipment Maintenance and IT Costs;
6. Indirect Costs.
7. Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

D.14. Key Personnel: ECA recommends that the applicant identify intended key personnel positions via an asterisk (*) or other marking in the proposal budget, budget narrative, or a separate appendix. If not provided in the application, recipients must submit the names, titles, and brief biographical sketches of key personnel to the Grants Officer and GOR within 30 days of an award being issued. Additional information regarding key personnel requirements can be found in the State Department's Standard Terms and Conditions, VI. Recipient Responsibility

and Compliance with Federal Requirements (link to: https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/).

D.15.   Non-Competitive Continuations: Pending successful performance and the availability of funds this award will utilize Non-Competitive Continuations as discussed above.

D.15.a. For competitions that will exercise a Non-Competitive Continuation <u>applicants</u> must submit:
- The SF-424A which must include the budget request amount for the base-year of the program.
- A detailed proposal narrative and budget for the base year of funding (Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instruction Document (PSI) for general budget guidance.).   The narrative should also include a brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional non-competitive continuation years, pending successful program performance and the availability of funds.
- An abbreviated/estimated summary budget presenting the total projected costs for the anticipated total duration of programming (base year, plus two non-competitive continuation years).

D.15.b. To exercise the Non-Competitive Continuation mechanism the recipient will be required to submit:
- Performance and financial reports on time.
- A request in writing to ECA at least 30 days in receipt of the NCC invitation.
- A summary budget that projects expenses through the end of the current year.
- A detailed budget outlining expenses for the requested non-competitive continuation year.
- A brief narrative to support the continuation of the award.

D.15.c. For awards using Non-Competitive Continuations, in addition to the Substantial Involvement for the Cooperative Agreement, the ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will:

1. Closely monitor the recipient's performance through site visits, desk audits, mandatory performance and financial reports, consultations, and other forms of communication and dialogue before exercising additional non-competitive continuations. (Additional details regarding monitoring and oversight of the program by ECA representatives will be provided at the time the base-year award is made.)

1. Review and evaluate all quarterly or semi-annual program and financial reports;
   - All program and financial reporting requirements must be current and up-to-date before ECA will exercise additional non-competitive continuations.

- Any/all concerns, issues, or modifications requested by the Grants Officer or Program Officer to the original program design or method of implementation must be responded to in writing.
- The ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will review and advise of ECA's approval or disapproval of the response before issuing subsequent non-competitive continuations.

1. Prior Grants Officer approval is required to utilize the remainder from an unobligated balance from a prior funding period to the subsequent funding period. If the Grants Officer determines that some or all of the unobligated funds are not necessary to perform the program activity, the Grants Officer may decline the Recipient's request to utilize the remainder from the unobligated balance.

The Grants Officer may, at their discretion, use the unobligated balance to reduce or offset future funding for a subsequent funding period. An unobligated balance at the end of a funding period is not sufficient justification to utilize the remainder of funds. A final determination and approval to utilize the remainder of any funds will be communicated via a cost amendment with adjustment, if any, to new obligation amounts.

The request to utilize the remainder from an unobligated balance must include:

- A brief narrative why funds remain unobligated and how the unobligated funds will be used to complete the previously approved goals and objectives of the program; and,

- A detailed budget that reflects the amount of unobligated funds to date, and anticipated expenditures in the subsequent period of performance for all cost categories under the authorized budget.

D.16. Application Deadline and Method of Submission:
Application Deadline Date: Monday, July 18, 2022.
Method of Submission: Applications may only be submitted electronically through Grants.gov (https://www.grants.gov). Complete solicitation packages are available at Grants.gov in the "Search Grants" portion of the system.

D.17. Grants.gov Registration, Application Submission, and Receipt Procedures
Eligible organizations should follow the instructions available in the 'Get Started' portion of the site (http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html).

D.17.a. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov
Applicants should read instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines. Applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this NOFO to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov. Organization applicants can find complete instructions here: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html

D.17.b. How to Submit an Application to ECA via Grants.gov
For access to complete instruction on how to apply for Notice of Funding Opportunities on Grants.gov, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html

D.17.c. Grants.gov Support and Submission Issues
Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission issues to:

Grants.gov Customer Support
Contact Center Phone:800 -518-4726
Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; closed on federal holidays
Email: support@grants.gov

D.17.d. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission
Applicants have until 11:59 p.m., Washington, DC time of the closing date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded to the Grants.gov site. <u>There are no exceptions to the above deadline. Applications uploaded to the site after the application deadline date and time will be automatically rejected by the Grants.gov system, and will be technically ineligible.</u>

<u>Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.</u>

Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When ECA successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgement of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Please also be mindful of any Grants.gov generated error messages that may appear during the application process as they may result in some documents not transmitting correctly.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

The Grants.gov website includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process, including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the "Applicant FAQs" section of the website. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov website, well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

PLEASE NOTE: ECA bears no responsibility for applicant timeliness of submission or data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via Grants.gov. Prior to submitting applications through Grants.gov, please ensure you meet all Grants.gov system and software requirements, including Adobe software compatibility. You can verify if your version of Adobe software is compatible with Grants.gov, by visiting https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html.

It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals via the Grants.gov web portal to ensure that proposals have been received by Grants.gov in their entirety, and ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

D.18. Intergovernmental Review of Applications: Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

E.   APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas and State Department regional bureaus, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. All awards will be assessed for risk prior to their issuance. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the U.S. Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

E.1.   REVIEW CRITERIA

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

1. **Program planning:** Detailed relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. Agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above.

2. **Ability to achieve program objectives:** Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan.

3. **Support of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI):** Proposals should show substantive support of ECA's policy on Diversity. Proposals should demonstrate how DEI will be achieved in the different aspects of program administration and of program design, content and implementation, including individual participant recruitment, selection and placement. It is important that proposals have a clearly articulated DEI plan and not simply express general support for the concept of DEI. Proposals should demonstrate how DEI will enhance the program's goals and objectives and the participants' exchange experience. Proposals should demonstrate how the program will further engage diverse and underserved communities.

4. **Institution's Capacity/Record:** Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau awards (grants or cooperative agreements) as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. In addition to Letters of Endorsement, DOS will also use past performance as an indicator of an applicant's ability to successfully perform the work. A separate and clearly labeled attachment of the proposal must contain any letters of endorsement and between three and five references who may be called upon to discuss recently completed or ongoing work performed for professional exchange programs.

5. **Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):** Your proposal should include a plan to monitor the program's activities (primarily SME work and progress), administering the data collection tool(s), and meeting regularly and coordinating as necessary. Award-receiving organizations/institutions will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.

6. **Cost-effectiveness/Cost-sharing:** The overhead components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

F.1. Award Notices: Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal ECA procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the ECA's Grants Division. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer, and transmitted to the recipient's responsible officer as identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the ECA program office coordinating this competition following the completion of the review process.

F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements: Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following: Office of Management and Budget's Guidance 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Effective December 26, 2014, replacing the previous circulars).

For a copy of the OMB Guidance cited, please contact the U.S. Government Publishing Office or download from the www.ecfr.gov website.

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb
https://www.state.gov/m/a/ope/index.htm

F.3. Region and Topic Specific requirements: The following additional requirements apply to this project:

F.3.a. Prohibition on the use of Federal Funds to Promote, Support, or advocate for the legalization or practice of Prostitution: The U.S. Government is opposed to prostitution and related activities, which are inherently harmful and dehumanizing, and contribute to the phenomenon of trafficking in persons. None of the funds made available under this agreement may be used to promote, support, or advocate the legalization or practice of prostitution. Nothing in the preceding sentence shall be construed to preclude assistance

designed to ameliorate the suffering of, or health risks to, victims while they are being trafficked or after they are out of the situation that resulted from such victims being trafficked.

The recipient shall insert the foregoing provision in all sub-agreements under this award.

This provision includes express terms and conditions of the agreement and any violation of it shall be grounds for unilateral termination of the agreement by the Department of State prior to the end of its term.

F.3.b. Palestinian Authority, West Bank, and Gaza Programming: All awards made under this competition must be executed according to all relevant U.S**.** laws and policies regarding assistance to the Palestinian Authority, and to the West Bank and Gaza. Organizations must consult with relevant Public Affairs Offices before entering into any formal arrangements or agreements with Palestinian organizations or institutions.

Note: To assure that planning for the inclusion of the Palestinian Authority complies with requirements, please contact Tom Rathburn at RathburnTG@state.gov or Benjamin Olsen at OlsenBC@ state.gov for additional information.

F.4. Reporting Requirements: You must provide ECA with an electronic copy of the following required reports:

> 1.) Performance Progress Reports (PPRs) shall be required at a minimum annually and no more frequently than quarterly. Annual reports shall be due 120 calendar days after the cooperative agreement year; quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer.) The complete report and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the Recipient as a *Post Award Activity* under the corresponding record for this Cooperative Agreement/Grant in the U.S. Department of State's SAMS Domestic,with a copy to IVLPgrants@state.gov. For visitor services, reports must include the number of International Visitors benefiting from the program and services, including a statistical grid identifying the activity and a tally of the number of IVs from other national program agencies. For all services, a matrix-style report should be submitted recording usage by national program agencies, including the number of visitors served and listing the participants. For federalism lectures, the report should identify not only the national program agencies, but the identity of each lecturer/speaker.

> 2.) The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR can be accessed at: http://www.dpm.psc.gov/. Once a financial report has been approved by the

Department, the Recipient must upload the approved report to SAMS Domestic, in the same manner specified for the programmatic reports. Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Cooperative Agreements/Grants.

3.) A final program and financial report no more than 120 days after the expiration or termination of the award;

4.) Because the Competition will allow for the exercise of Non-Competitive Continuations (NCC), applicants must submit program and financial reports on time. The due dates for these reports will be included in the cooperative agreement. The program and financial reports must demonstrate substantial progress by addressing progress towards the original approved goals and objectives, relative activities and events, and supporting fiscal data. The reports will be reviewed by both the assigned Grant Officer and Program Officer.

5.) For In-House IVLP On Demand Support, the award recipient must provide ECA/PE/V/C/R with **Quarterly Projected Expenditure Reports**. The award recipient is required to use the most recent version of the ECA Quarterly Projection Spreadsheet. The projection sheet is due by the 15th day of the 3rd month of each quarter. The report should indicate projections for the next quarter in the following categories: IVLP on Demand group project enhancement expenses and IVLP Division special initiative group project enhancement expenses; Interpreter/ Liaison expenses; and any Reasonable Accommodation Charges. **Travel Manager Company (TMC):** IVLP On Demand participants domestic air travel; Interpreter/Liaison domestic air travel. **Number of Participants:** IVLP On Demand participants and number of Interpreters/Liaisons. The report should be sent to IVLPgrants@state.gov.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to ECA in their regular program reports. (Please refer to D.10. Program Monitoring and Evaluation information.)

All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to ECA upon request.

F.5. Program Data Requirements: Award recipients will be required to maintain specific data on program participants and activities in an electronically accessible database format that can be shared with ECA as required. At a minimum, the data must include the following:
1) Name, address, contact information and biographic sketch of all persons who travel internationally on funds provided by the agreement or who benefit from the award funding but do not travel.

2) Itineraries of international and domestic travel, providing dates of travel and cities in which any exchange experiences take place. Final schedules for in-country and U.S. activities must be received by the ECA Program Officer at least three work days prior to the official opening of the activity.

G.   Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Tom Rathburn, U.S. Department of State, Office of International Visitors, (ECA/PE/V), SA-5, 3rd Floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, telephone (202) 394-9647, or email RathburnTG@state.gov, or Benjamin Olsen, telephone (202) 256-3024, or by email at OlsenBC@state.gov.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this NOFO should reference the title and funding opportunity number listed at the top of this solicitation.

Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, ECA Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

H. Other Information:

Notice:
The terms and conditions published in this NOFO are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative. Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section F3. Reporting Requirements above.

Lee Satterfield   May 6, 2022
Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State